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Engineering

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ENGIN STORAGE

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
Meeting of Oct., 1919.

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Canadian Railway Club

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CONTENTS

REPORT OF OCTOBER MEETING

LECTURE AND DISCUSSION ON "COMPETITION, COMBINATION AND CO-OPERATION."

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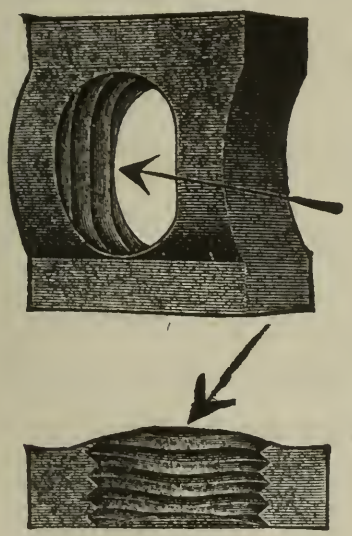

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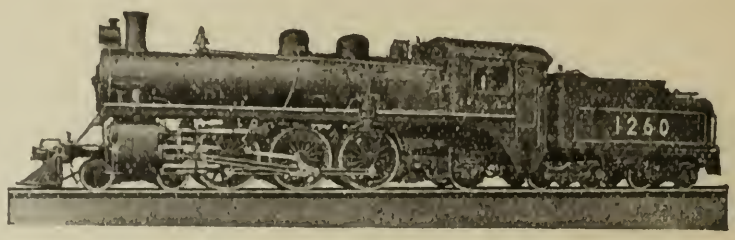

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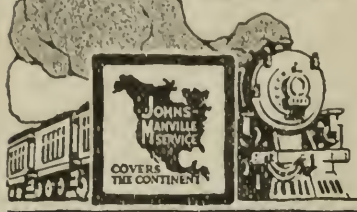

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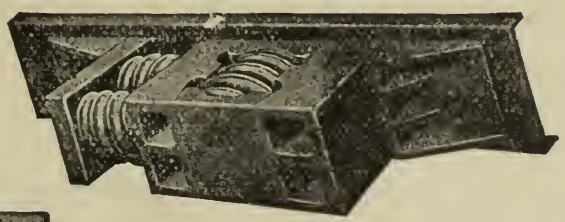

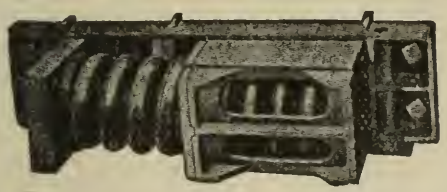

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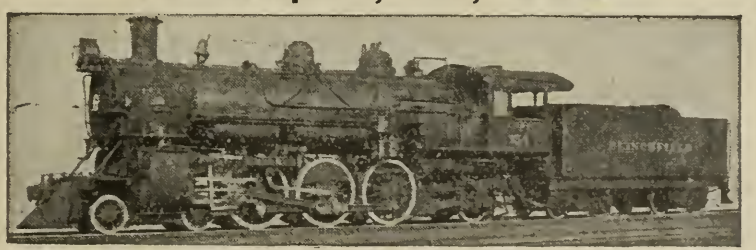

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE CANADIAN RAILWAY CLUB.

Windsor Hotel, Montreal,
October 14th, 1919.

Chairman (Mr. John Hendry):

Gentlemen, come to order please. I am glad to see such a large gathering here to-night, and am sure we will all enjoy the lecture that will be presented later on. Cards have been distributed on the seats which the members should sign in order that we may have a record of the attendance. The minutes of the previous meeting have been printed and are being forwarded to you. I have no other remarks to make at present and will call in the Secretary to read the list of applicants for membership.

Secretary:

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, the following applications have been passed by the Executive Committee, and are now read for your approval.

New Members.

C. P. Archibald, Sales Agent, Thos. Davidson Mfg. Co., Ltd., Montreal.

J. P. Beahan, Simplex Cleaner Mfg. Co., 296 King St., Toronto, Ont.

H. C. Bell Trav. Engineer, Loco Super Co., 24 Lincoln Ave., St. Albans.

C. C. Chumley, Oxweld Railroad Service Co., 587 Dorchester St., Montreal.

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F. Williams, Mech. Designer, Can. Nat. Rlys., 44 Williams St., Moncton, N.B.

A. Woodhouse, Dillon Crucible Alloys, Ltd., 344 St. James St., Montreal.

O. W. Young, The Pyle National Co., 1334 North Kostner Ave., Chicago.

Chairman:

Gentlemen, you have heard the applications which have been read. What is your pleasure?

Mr. A. Allan:

I move they be accepted.

Mr. James Coleman:

Seconded.

Chairman:

Moved by Mr. Allan, seconded by Mr. Coleman, that these applications be accepted. Are all in favor?

Carried.

MEMBERS PRESENT.

Hendry, J.
Allan, A.
Atkinson, T. G.
Ayers, J. R.
Battley, E. R.
Bell, H. C.
Boughton, L.
Boyer, G.
Brady, F. P.
Brooks, F. A
Brooks, P. A.
Brown, L.
Burns,J.
Carter, J. W.
Chown, T. C.
Clarke, J. E.
Clark, R. L.
Coleman, J.
Coleman, J. W.
Coleman, M. T.
Cunningham, E. A.
Curry, C. R.
Desparois, J. D.
Donnelly, M. R.
Dougall, J. H.
Dunn, G. W.
Gibson, F. J.
Goldstraw, W.
Gordon, A.
Gray, W. Lyall
Greenough, W. C.
Gregory, W. A.
Hannah, W. D.
Heafield, R.
Heafield, R. W.
Holland, N.
Hudson, G. F.
Hudson, T. C.
Hunter, W. C.
Hyman, W. J.
James, H. H.
Kelly, R.
Kerr. J. M.
King, A.
Lachapelle, J. D.
La Jeunnesse, A.
Liddy, S. J. W.
Lloyd, E. E.
McDonald, A.
MacNab, E. S. M.
McCrachen, F. C.
McVeigh, E. J.
Miller, M. J.
Miller, W.
Milord, J. P.
Mimms, A. E.
Moore, F. W.
Moore, T. W.
Morin, F.
Munro, K. E.
Murray, W. B.
Naylor, H. R.
Nix, E. A.
Partridge, R.
Payne, H.
Pearce, H.
Peverley, R. D.
Pouphrett, W. F.
Powell, J.
Primeau, J. L.
Prouse, W.
Purdy, F. A.
Pyne, R. A.
Reynolds, P. P.
Riddington, A.
Robb. G. W.
Robb. W. H.
Robbins, N. B.
Robertson, N.
Robinson, E.
Royer, C.

Russell, C. H.	Stenhouse, J. G.	Wheatley, W. H.
Savoy, F.	Stewart, W. F.	Williams, L. A.
Sharpe, H. W.	Thomas, E.	Wilson, G. M.
Shortley, B. F.	Thorp, H. W.	Winterrowd, W. H.
Sleigh, T.	Tinkler, C.	Wright, A. B.
Soltau, G. R.	Tinkler, J. E.	Young, C. E.
Spence, W.	Viberg, E. R.	Young, O. W.
Starke, A.	Watkin, B.	Booth, W. A.
Stephens, H.	Wells, C. W.	and others.

Chairman:

Gentlemen, it now affords me great pleasure to introduce the speaker of the evening, Major S. P. Robins, General Manager, The Dearborn Chemical Company of Canada, his lecture being entitled "Competition, Combination and Co-operation."

Major Robins:

Mr. President and gentlemen, I feel I cannot commence the observations I am about to make without first of all expressing my profound appreciation of the invitation extended to me to open the discussion this evening. I am reminded of a good Canadian citizen who on one occasion was visiting in the Southern States, walking along the street one day he met a colored man, and asked him if he could change a ten dollar bill. The negro replied, "Sho' boss, I cannot, but ah thank yo' fo' the compliment just the same." I may not be able this evening to exactly "fill the bill," but I want to thank the club for the compliment done me. I want also to express to the members present my appreciation of the extreme courtesy of the Secretary of this club. If the qualities of courteous persistency and dogged determination are essential to the fulfillment of the duties of the secretariat then the club has elected an ideal Secretary. I might make an open confession and tell this meeting that I did my utmost to get out of this task but the Secretary would not let me. I have also to make an apology. I never could write a paper and I have never as yet been unable to read one, but inasmuch as what I am to say to-night is to be printed in the monthly publication of the club it was felt I had better set myself to the task, so that what I say will resemble to some extent what will be printed.

It was suggested, Mr. President, by one or two members that I take up the question of Capital and Labor—an all-consuming subject at the present time. I am one of those who

feel that far too many harsh things have been said by capital about labor and by labor about capital.

I was brought up in a seaport town, and coming up to the harbor there were some very dangerous shoals. I remember an old captain saying on one occasion that while coming up the channel he could not tell what was wrong in the engine room, but if he called down the tube "full speed ahead" the man at the other end was almost certain to go "half speed astern," until at last the captain lost his patience and called down the tube and said, "Is there a blithering idiot at the end of the tube?" and the man down in the hole replied, "Not at this end, sir." Now, as to which end of the labor trouble is to blame I am not disposed to say, but I do think that too many harsh and hard things have been said by each side of the other.

"COMPETITION, COMBINATION and CO-OPERATION."

It can be said with a great amount of assurance that we live in an era when old customs, conditions, and methods of thought are constantly being superseded, and that nowhere has the necessity for readjustment been more marked than in the World of Economics. Consequently a vast and welcome change has taken place in the attitude of Economists toward ethical questions. This change was inevitable in view of the gradual development of social consciousness, coincident with the growing knowledge of the presence in the State of wealth of great magnitude on the one hand, with desperate and hopeless poverty on the other. Another contributing factor has been the awakening of Democracy to the powers it possesses, and the possibility of using those powers wisely in the direction of economic freedom. Thus we have to a much larger degree than ever before a genuine desire to learn the best way to influence the application of social science to the promotion of human well-being rather than for self interest. There is a world-wide and constantly growing dissatisfaction with social conditions and a deepening conviction that economic law is faulty in its application or such marked inequalities could not exist. And yet, strange as it may seem, as one English writer puts it: "It was not oppression, or academic Socialism, or a gospel of hate which started the Social Revolution in England. It was the high power automobile, the great country house, feasting and pleasure seeking; the new hotels and mer-

çhants' palaces, the obvious contrast between the monstrous inequalities of fortune."

It was the comfortable and educated artisan to whom this contrast first appealed, the coal miner, the railway worker, the engineer, those who formed the flower of the British working classes. The workers contrasted the pursuit of enjoyment and pleasure with their own limited and uncertain lot; with long hours of toil; with unemployment always confronting them as a possibility; and an end with no visible progress in comfort and security. While a few thousand persons, divided between them some hundreds of millions of the national income, more than 95% of the population died possessed of property so trivial in amount as not to be worth the cost of valuing for estate duty taxation.

The returned soldier comes back after engaging in the bloodiest war the world has ever experienced, after witnessing barbarities and brutalities of the most diabolical nature and after hazarding his life in defence of the rights and liberties of civilization; he comes back and finds in all big centres, and especially in those working on government contracts, men who have immensely increased their fortunes in a time of national calamity; and men of no property and no particular talent or distinction, but who took advantage of the national need and suddenly acquired enormous wealth. And so the soldier finds that he was fighting for the benefit of private exploiters while seeking to insure the continuity of the free institutions of civilization, and, as if to add insult to injury, he sees prices, directed by some inexplicable force, rising steadily against him and eating away at his standard of life. Little wonder then we have social unrest—the surprising thing is that the unrest is not of greater magnitude and of far greater seriousness.

These conditions, therefore, led me to select as a topic for discussion this evening the three words:

COMPETITION, COMBINATION AND CO-OPERATION.

(1) There is sufficient in any one of the words for an evening's discussion. Our subject is one of considerable magnitude and of paramount importance, occupying the attention of the civilized world to-day in such a manner and to such an extent as to be without parallel in the history of man. It does not require a very keen insight to see that

we are on the eve of great changes in the commercial and industrial life of the people, and if we are to maintain our position we must give ourselves to a very close study of the problems confronting us, and be prepared to take our stand and adopt principles which will be for the good, not of any section of the people, but of the people as a whole. Whoever undertakes to write the official history of the closing decades of the nineteenth and the opening decades of the twentieth centuries will have to give a very prominent place to all three words which form our subject to-night: **Competition, Combination and Co-operation.** Already a number of unofficial works have been published, among them, one from the pen of Mr. Edwin Hodder in which he outlines the history of the 19th century. "The century was one of unparalleled scientific development, social progress and political advancement." No one will for a moment question that during the century civilization advanced by leaps and bounds and with it Competition became keener and this Competition gave birth to Combination. The Century also (paradoxical as it may seem) gave birth to the Humanist and the development of a new order of chivalry. Victor Hugo and his school in France, and Lord Shaftsbury in England. The Century was one of heavy drinking and bad language — not that we are altogether free from these things at the present time. But the social conscience has become so quickened that we have come to regard these things in an altogther different light from that in which they were looked upon fifty or one hundred years ago. Mr. Hodder, in his book, "The Life of the Century," says:

"Gentlemen swore at each other because an oath added emphasis to their assertions. They swore at inferiors because their commands would not otherwise receive prompt obedience. The minister cursed the sailors because it made them listen more attentively to his sermons. Lord Braxford, a famous Scotch Judge, offered to a lady, at whom he swore because she played badly at Whist, the sufficient apology that he had mistaken her for his wife." The people had quite enough to make them grave and serious. It was more than many of them could do to find food for themselves and their families. Working men groaned under heavy burdens and were stung by the reproach that they were but a mere part of the machinery of the country, and they were fettered by vexatious laws. To join together to defend themselves was against the Combination Laws and rendered them liable to the criminal law. They were liable

to heavy punishment if they attempted to emigrate when the labor market was overstocked. To "Put down" was the remedy for all political and social complaints, and "Putting down" meant hanging in most cases. Under such circumstances it was only natural that disorders broke out and the government resorted to measures which almost invariably proved to be futile. When machinery had taken the place of manual labor, and children could manage it as well as adults, there was a ghastly traffic in the young. "Child Jobbers" scoured the country for the purpose of purchasing children to sell them again into the bondage of factory slaves on the one hand, and to owners of brick fields, coal pits, and employers of agricultural gangs on the other. What these children suffered Lord Shaftsbury revealed to the world. But the close of the nineteenth and the opening of the twentieth centuries has brought us face to face with world-wide Competition, and living in an atmosphere charged with the ideas and purposes of Combination.

Arthur Hugh Clough, in his little book, "The Latest Decalogue" presents a travesty of the Ten Commandments. Consider, for example, his new reading of the first of them: 1st., "Thou shalt have one God only. Who would be at the expense of two?" or the 2nd., "No graven images may be worshipped except the currency," or the 4th., "At church on Sunday to attend will serve to keep the world thy friend." It appeared to this writer that self denial, which is the very essence of the Christian faith, had been replaced in the hearts and minds of a vast multitude of its professors by selfishness. Utilitarianism, he thought, had infected the noblest of the world's creeds and was eating the life out of them. Perhaps the last of his commandments exhibits in a peculiarly striking way what I am insisting upon; "Thou shalt not covet, but tradition approves all forms of competition." The tradition he speaks of is not of very long standing, but has spread throughout the civilized world. Competition has been the very main spring of our industrial and commercial system. It is the very foundation on which the old so-called "orthodox" Political Economists built what they were pleased to call their "Science." Mr. Mill expressly says that: "Only through the principle of competition has Political Economy any pretension to the character of a science." "Competition," says Boccaro, "is in political economy, what the law of universal gravita-

tion is in physics, the law of parallelogram of force in mechanics and free will in morals."

It would be easy to multiply similar quotations but it is not necessary. Everyone familiar with the writings of the School in question is well aware that the principle of free and unrestricted competition regulating the prices of things by supply and demand is the principle on which all their theories hang. That is what Adam Smith calls, "The obvious and simple system of natural liberty," the very essence of which is as he tells us, "To leave every man (so long as he does not violate the laws of justice) perfectly free to pursue his own interests in his own way and to bring his industry and his capital into competition with those of any man or order of men." "So long as he does not violate the laws of justice." What does the proviso mean? Whatever it may have meant for Adam Smith it certainly means for nearly all writers of his school,—so long as you keep on the "windy" side of the law. It is they who persistently ignore, if they do not in terms deny, the existence of any connection between the moral and economic forms; it is they who form the tradition of which Clough speaks that "all forms of competition not forbidden by law are allowable."

I am far from denying that competition is, in itself, natural to man. Let me enlarge upon this for a moment. Human life is not a state of peace. In all its fields, provinces and segments, it is and must be a state of war. Carlyle says that man is a born fighter, his life is one continuous struggle, now with adversity, now with disease, now with bogs and tangled forests, he struggles from the beginning to the end. It is true of our physical life. It is true of our moral life, of our intellectual and social life. It is also true of our industrial and commercial life. One writer has said "that without Competition our industrial and commercial life would stagnate. It is unquestionably an agent of great utility in production, in distribution and in consumption." "It is the source of those fruitful strifes and rivalries of peace which are instruments not only of the world's material progress but to some extent of its moral progress also."

Permit a further quotation from an author by the name of Bastiat: "Competition, which we might also call freedom, notwithstanding all the resistance that it arouses, and in spite of all the declamation that pursues it, is essentially the democratic law. It is the most

progressive, most equalizing, most humanitarian of all those to which Providence has confided the progress of human society." Such, in general, are the praises bestowed by authors upon Competition. Coming to particulars, he Bastiat, attributes to it the return to a just equilibrium in value, the impossibility of Leonine contracts, of exorbitant demands, of inequality in mutual service, of stagnation of capital, of high prices. But are those of us who find ourserves on a higher plane, of life, who recognize what Shakespeare firmly calls "The Moral laws of nature and of nations," as dominating all,—are we, without reservation or demur, to accept all the praises which panegyrists of free competition bestow upon it? We may admit that it stimulates the human faculties, and that it increases the supply of things necessary and desirable, and promotes their exchange, and so adds greatly to the comfort of human life. We may agree with Bastiat that it is in the best sense of the word" democratic," for it opens out or at all events facilitates a career for talents. But is it praiseworthy or indeed tolerable in all its forms? It is difficult to see how anyone who does not close the eyes of his understanding, than which, as Bishop Butler was wont to say, "nothing is easier," could maintain that. Look at the industrial world to-day and see what is the practical issue of this approval of all forms of Competition. What is it? A cancerous formation of luxury growing out of a root of pauperism. The maxim, "Buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest," or as another version runs, "get as much work done as you can and pay as little as possible for it." That maxim has been invoked to justify the most odious forms of sweating and rack-renting. Well may the voice of denunciation be raised against the cruelty and waste of irresponsible competition. Assuredly forms of competition which issue in multitudes working inhuman hours in horrible and unhealthy conditions, dwelling in miserably congested areas, we cannot approve. What, then, is the criterion of fair competition. What is the test of its use as distinguished from its abuse? I said just now that industrial and commercial life, like all segments of existence, is strife, and surely the true rule here, as throughout the battle of life, is sufficiently indicated in the words, "Strive lawfully." A certain Capitalist in the great Republic to the south is reported to have said, "There is no d—d sentiment about business with me. I know no friendship in trade, and if I get my commercial rival into a hole I mean

to keep him there." And do we not see every day the most elementary dictates of the moral law ignored in the greed for gain? Advantage taken directly or indirectly of the weak and distressed; lying and intimidation freely resorted to? It seems to be thought that in the Commercial and Industrial world we need only follow, "The simple rule, the good old plan, that they should take who have the power, and they should keep who can."

No more monstrous mistake is possible. I cannot doubt—it would be against my better nature to doubt, that the moral law rules by its mandates, and by its penalties in that industrial and commercial strife, which is an undeniable and necessary part of life. Considerations of right and wrong should regulate the relations of master and servant, of shopkeeper and customer. There is such a thing as a fair wage of labor, and Competition, working by the law of supply and demand, is not alone sufficient to determine it. There is such a thing as honest trading. A lie is none the less a lie because it assumes the form of an advertisement. Yes, in the industrial strife of Competition we are subject to the law of virtue which we are born under, a law of which the penal sanctions are none the less real because they are not found in any Act of Parliament. Let us have free Competition, but we shall do well to assure ourselves that it is really free, a competition in which everyone is really at liberty to make the most and best of himself, but let us remember here, as everywhere else, obedience to the moral law is the condition of freedom.

(2). Competition which regulates industrial relations is not free or unrestricted or pure. It is affected by the interests of competition. It is affected by the common and statute law. It is affected by traditions, moral and social. It is effected by Combination. Indeed we might say that Competition is rapidly giving place to Combination of Workmen on the one hand, and of Capitalists on the other. That is a fact, and one of the most significant facts in the world just now. Carlos Martyn, in his little book, says, "Some broad-shouldered, hard-knuckled rogue who is more adroit than the rest of the boys, who toils not neither does he spin, whose shirt-front is decorated by a diamond big enough for the headlight of a locomotive, and whose fingers are manacled with rings,—manacles which ought to be worn on the wrists—is presently recognized as a Boss. A number of local Bosses get together and form a "Combine" by pooling their interests for the purpose of filling as many

offices as possible with their adherents, and thus controlling the municipality or country or state. This combine is called a "ring." We must not conclude that these men are exceptionally bad. They are not. But seeing a door leading to wealth and power left wide open by public neglect and indifference they have walked in and made themselves at home. We must turn them out, and lock them out, and, if necessary, lock them up."

Now, I am far from denying—I think no one can deny—that Combination is, in itself perfectly legitimate in our present state of society. Men combined for a common purpose indefinitely increase the power of each for the attainment of that purpose. And they have a natural right to combine. It is part of the natural right of every man to make the most and best of himself; a right which of course is not unlimited,—no right is,—and which may be abused, as all rights may. Union is strength. But at present I am most concerned with industrial combination, and especially Combinations of Workmen, usually known as Trade Unions, and Combinations of Capitalists of which the commonest forms are Federations of Employers and known as Combines. Most of us are old enough to remember when Trade Unions were looked upon as wicked conspiracies for the ruin of Capitalists, and indeed for some time the law of the land so regarded them; but looking at the matter from the point of view of moral philosophy it is difficult to see how Combinations of Workmen to maintain and advance their interests against employers can be pronounced to be in themselves wrongful. They are a legitimate means for a legitimate end. The undeniable outcome of what the old Political Economist called "Free Competition" was to lower wages. The Competition was not free. The contracts in which it issued were not free. An essential element of freedom of contract is parity of conditions. What parity of condition was there between employers "full to the utmost measure of what things human desire could seek or apprehend," and the workmen, who if they declined to accept a competition wage had the only alternative of starving or the semi-imprisonment of some charitable institute. Workmen in time discovered the advantage of collective bargaining over individual bargaining with employers of labor, of Combination over Competition. In the extremity of their wretchedness they resorted to Trade Unionism as a measure of self-defense. But even Trade Unions have not always been unmitigated blessings. Frequently these Combinations

of Workmen induce a spirit of indifference towards the rights and interests of the community at large. The members of some Trade Unions have displayed a tendency, and more than a tendency, to separate from the rest of the community, a tendency to regard the community as their natural enemy and delight in the thought of waging war upon it. Hence the very idea of a common country with its superior claims and paramount rights has been effaced from the minds of multitudes. This is a national danger, the gravity of which no one could scarcely over-estimate. Surely no one can view without grave regard the strikes in which Trade Unionism often issues. I am far from denying, indeed I strenuously maintain that a strike may be quite justifiable, but even then it is a rude weapon causing lamentable suffering to the innocent, and frequently piercing the hands of those who wield it. Of course, the criterion of the use and abuse of a strike is clear enough in itself although its application is by no means easy. It is whether the demand to enforce which the strike is resorted to is a just demand. For here, as in the case of the employer, justice must rule, and the eventful appeal is to the moral law.

Mr. Sydney Webb, an ardent defender of unionism, some time ago spoke in strong language of the device of the "restriction of numbers" as being not only injurious to industrial efficiency, but, as he admits, is morally wrong. On the very same principle that we repudiate the maxim, "Buy labor in the cheapest market and sell your product in the dearest," we must also repudiate the maxim, "Sell the minimum of labor for the maximum of wages." We have heard a great deal of late about restriction of output by workers, and it is open to precisely the same impeachment as the restriction of output by capitalists. Before the outbreak of the present strike in the steel industry of the United States it was estimated that strikes had cost the United States one billion of dollars in six months. These strikes resulted in serious disruption of business, curtailment of production, and obstruction of trade at a vital time, which, without question, had something to do with the increase in the cost of living. Everybody to-day is talking of the high cost of living when it is in some measure due to the high cost of strikes. The more strikes there are the higher is bound to go the cost of living because wages go up and the hours of labor come down which must of necessity increase the prices to the consumer. This is not a time for strikes. It is not a time really for shorter hours of

labor. The condition of the world to-day calls for redoubled effort towards increased production. There is another party interested in this constant war-fare between Employer and Employed and that is the Public. The Public is being aroused by the effect upon it of class action as evidenced by the general disapproval of the recent railway strike in the Old Country, which after eight days of suffering and hardship was terminated, and in which termination Public Opinion played an important part. The New York Tribune of a recent date contained the following:

> "There may be a rewriting of the definition of treason. A group which gets hold of the throat of society and then squeezes in the spirit of a highwayman outlaws itself. The public is being rapidly educated and will find a way to protect itself against internal enemies. Mankind cannot get along if split into fighting class-groups. There must be only one class and all must bear allegience to it.
>
> "The day is not far distant when a logical reply will be returned to all who repudiate social obligations. A man who refuses to do his part in the huge co-operative business of life may be denied the benefit of other men's co-operation may be shut off from the food, for example, brought to his neighborhood by a chain of faith-keepers.
>
> "The public is an animal of very great patience. But prod it too often and the public is capable of identifying its tormentors. The man who takes a job in connection with a necessary public service must understand, he may not quit altogether as he pleases. If he seeks to starve others he may be forbidden to eat.
>
> "The issue now temporarily deferred must some day be squarely met. Minorities must not be allowed to rule. The majority must resist powerful minority organizations by a more powerful organization."

There has been a tendency on the part of a section of the workers to go in the direction of a more idealistic condition of things. Many of them have contemplated the possibility of bringing about a state of society in which, if there was not uniformity, there might at least be much less sharply defined extremes. It did not, however, take the Canadian workers long to see the hollowness of Bolshevism, of which the only good thing that can be said is, that in Hungary they have passed a law making it a penal offence for a waiter to take a tip. Trade Unionism now has its

own history and its own traditions; Bolshevism has its own formulas and its own aims. Bolshevism seeks to pull down wealth; Trade Unionism seeks to raise up poverty. Bolshevism would destroy private interest; Trade Unionism would preserve private interests in the only way in which they can be safely and justly preserved, namely by reconciling them with public right. Bolshevism would kill enterprise; Trade Unionism would rescue enterprise from the trammels of privilege and preference. Bolshevism assails the pre-eminence of the individual. Trade Unionism seeks to build up a minimum standard for the mass. Bolshevism exhalts the rule; Trade Unionism exhalts the man. Bolshevism attacks capital; Trade Unionism atacks monopoly. Bolshevism wishes to reconstruct the world, they begin by leaving out human nature.

Now let us glance at the combination of Capitalists. It has arisen in two ways; 1st, in antagonism to Trade Unionism. The Combination of Capitalists is a weapon forged to combat the Combination of Workmen. 2nd, It has been brought about by the growing perception by Capitalists that union among themselves is much better than Competition; for they may thereby monopolize production, barter, and commerce. The founders of Trade Unionism supposed that the natural relation of Capitalists is one of Competition and not Combination. They were in grave error. The old orthodox Political Economists believed that "free competition" would make an end of monopolies. They were in grave error too. Someone has said: "Competition, when it is finished, bringeth forth monopoly." Competition has issued in Combination which regulate in their own terms production and distribution. They have for their express purpose to keep up prices, to augment profits, to eliminate useless labor, to diminish risks and control the output. Now, are we to say that such a Combination of Capitalists is in itself wrong? It is not easy to see on what intelligent grounds that can be maintained. Capitalists, like workmen, are certainly at liberty to pursue their own interests in the way which they judge best, provided always that way is not unethical. What is certainly wrong is that Combinations of Capitalists should disregard—as we frequently find them disregarding—all considerations of justice, humanity and civilization in order to attain their own ends. A Capitalism which absorbs not only the increase of production but the wages hitherto required for the sustenance of the workers is certainly un-

ethical. We may say of it, as the Duke of Weimar said of the domination of the First Napoleon when at the height of his glory: "It is unjust; it cannot last."

The Combination of Labor and the Combination of Capital—we have come to that. What is the next step? The fact is clear that machinery while increasing the product has diminished the reward of labor, and the reason why this is so is because the reciprocal duties which bind men together in a Commonwealth are lost sight of both in Unrestricted Competition and Unrestricted Combination.

It is absurd to suppose that individual freedom is or ever can be the sole principle by which society is regulated. Labor is a social function. Property is a social trust. The rights of property and the rights of labor involve correlative duties. Only in an organized polity is profitable labor possible, is property valid.

To sum up what I have said, Competition was carried to such an extent that it became what is known as "cut-throat," which term has no reference to the lives sacrificed but only to the fact that rival business men had become unduly active in cutting each other's throats commercially by unscrupulous under-selling and over-reaching, and the upshot of which commercial murders was the commercial suicide of Competition itself that it might yield the industrial throne to monopoly, in which Traders tired of cutting each other combined together to rob the public. Now, as Combination was the producers only escape from Competition, Co-operation will soon be seen to be the public's only escape from Combination. Selfish Competition is giving place to Selfish Combination, and we hope that both may soon give way to brotherly Co-operation.

Co-operative production has been regarded by humanitarians and reformers as among the most potent remedies of social ills. Co-operation in England, especially in the manufacturing districts of Yorkshire has attained enormous development in recent years. Its productive function has been exercised with augmented energy and signal success. But while distribution has become the main function of organized co-operation, and has on its broad outlines been developed according to the ideals of the founders of the movement, production has become subsidiary to distribution, its hand-maiden rather than its sister, and in the form and under the conditions upon which it is now carried on the ideals of its originators have been almost entirely abandoned. Co-operation has a history and a literature with

which probably the vast majority of its co-operators, so-called, the consuming beneficiaries, are indifferently acquainted. It exercised the reason, kindled the aspiration, and entered into the vaticinations of some of the great thinkers of last century. But it was to productive co-operation that philosophers looked for the amelioration of the industrial masses. Distributive and productive co-operation were in their origin distinct if not based on divergent models or ideals: they at least origined separately in time and place and owed their inception to different emergencies. If you take the productive side of co-operation you find that, so far as their being an "association of laborers themselves" the total individual membership of those associations consists of a very small percentage only of persons employed by the association.

Another remedy for the social unrest of the present is labor co-partnership, making the employees financially interested in the enterprise. In those establishments where the principle has been given a fair and reasonable trial it has proved a great success. All the forces of Production—Capital, Labor and Management—must work together, must work to one common end, must work on the lines of intelligent self-interest and not on the lines of narrow, personal selfishness, if any good is to be done. Now, what feasible method have we of drawing these forces together? Carry your minds back and examine the stages through which industry has passed and see whether we have any greater step to make to-day than our forefathers had at various periods. In the first period of all we were savages, controlled by a Chief, and if we met any other section or tribe who did not belong to us we promptly killed them, if we could, and for the sufficient reason that if we did not they would have killed us. That was the whole basis of the state of savagery. No working together was possible. After the state of savagery we developed into the state of slavery, and under slavery life was protected, which was a great gain. Slave owners considered it perfectly business-like to drive slaves to work with the lash and the whip. In the present days of wages we have a further development, and have not to make anything like so great a stride to take the workman from the position of wage "drawer," —I use the word "drawer" because we cannot under the wage system say that wages are always earned, as a great section of men earn more than they draw and the other section earn less than they draw,—I say it is nothing like so

big a jump from the position of wage drawer to that of Co-partner, as there was from savagery to slavery and from slavery to wage payment. But Industry and Commerce are not yet ready for a general advance along these lines and yet it is most evident that something must be done, and in every industrial concern or business enterprise it is possible to carry out at least in some degree the suggestions contained in a recent article in the London Times contributed by Boyd Cable, a United States writer:

> "If there is one better thing to do than to settle a labor dispute it is to prevent it arising, and employers could go a long step of the way to this desirable end on the same simple rule, 'Tell the Workers.'
>
> "Whatever the demands a body of workers may make, if the workers can be shown that the demands are unreasonable and unfair, and that they are going to inflict undue hardship on the public, then the workers will withdraw or moderate their demands.
>
> "As a rule the workers, unfortunately hear only one side—their own; or anything they hear of the other side's case is a garbled and distorted one.
>
> "Where the demands are not unreasonable the sooner the employers admit the fact and bring about a fair system of working the better for themselves.
>
> "Call the workers together and talk to them face to face; let any of them ask questions and answer them frankly. There could be no better example of how good and quick may be the results so obtained than the recent prompt settlement of the police unrest by one straight talk from the head to a big meeting of all ranks.
>
> "Team work always wins; but you can't have real team work when nine-tenths of the team don't know what and where the goal is. So, tell the workers, give them all the confidence you can, let them see what you're playing for, and that the interests of the firm are their interests.
>
> "And yet no serious attempt is made to stem the torrent of this evil influence; no really effective measures are taken to expose the lies, fallacies, false arguments and reasonings which are heaped upon the workers.
>
> "For this the blame can rest only on the employers.
>
> "You can find plenty of great captains of industry, leaders of trade, large manufacturers and employers of

labor who know well and curse heartily the evil propaganda, who grumble that "something ought to be done," and wonder why do not the government or this, that or the other ministry or the trade unions do it, but there are few who dream of doing it themselves."

Here is something which can be done by every employer. The principle is sound. It would do much to remove prejudice and inspire confidence, and with prejudice removed and confidence established you have a basis from which the more difficult problems can be discussed and adjusted with far less friction than at present. Employer and Employed would come into closer touch with each other, and further development along the lines I have suggested, or some other and perhaps more desirable ones, would be not merely a possibility but an actuality to the satisfaction and contentment of both sides of the enterprise.

Chairman:

Gentlemen, I would like to state to you that we have listened to one of the best papers this club has ever heard and would like to hear from some of the members pertaining to this subject.

Secretary:

Mr. President and Gentlemen. After listening to this most excellent lecture I am reminded of a verse that is a fitting tribute to the Major:

If you wish for information,
Or desire an explanation,
He's a brimming source of wisdom
That is fit for any man.
For assorted gilt-edged knowledge
He can discount any college,
He's simply a little wonder,
And he knows it all.

Mr. Wallace H. Robb:

I did not come here to-night with a desire to say anything but there is something in the address that makes it almost necessary for me to take notice of: that is, a certain reference to a time in the history of the world when swearing was in good order. Now, it is greatly to the benefit of this club and to the profit of the members to have such

a speaker as Major Robins, and my first experience in hearing him speak was at the last banquet of the club although I did not know him at that time. I have not attended many of the banquets, but there have been some I have attended when we had to listen to speeches that were somewhat "drawn out." I say this without any reflection whatever on the ability of those gentlemen who made the speeches. When it came the Major's turn to speak I turned to the gentlemen whom I happened to be with and used one of those expressions that belong to the past ages at the same time saying that I supposed this would be another of those "long-winded fellows." After he got warmed up I still thought of the same expression but gave vent to it with an entirely different application. I had changed my mind, and when I met him at the door I had nerve enough to tell him just what I had thought; and he, with his great understanding of human nature, really knew what I meant. I have taken the opportunity to-night — not to repeat those words, because I know better now — but to say that I still think he is the same kind of a speaker. (Laughter and applause.)

Mr. E. J. McVeigh:

Mr. President, the very excellence of the address we have listened to to-night makes it extremely difficult for the ordinary individual to get up and say anything, but there is considerable to be said providing a person could manage to say it. The speaker referred to the present as a time of danger. I believe that to be absolutely correct. I am also of the opinion that few of us appreciate just how great the danger is. The speaker has gone back and told us of the time when we were savages. He might have elaborated somewhat on this if he had wished, but on the subject discussed we can look back and see that this old war between Capital and Labor goes a long way in our history, and that war, so far as our history goes, began in the middle ages when there was strife between the Castle and the Hovel. There should not have been that strife but there was, and in that day there was an Aristocracy of Power. The people learned slowly THEIR power, and that Aristocracy of Power disappeared. The people eliminated it. Later on in the history of the world there was an Aristocracy of Birth and the greatest example that we had of that was the French nation. That Aristocracy was also eliminated by the people. To-day we have

the Aristocracy of Wealth, and the question we must face is this: is that Aristocracy to be eliminated? I certainly believe that if some of the things the speaker has pointed out as necessary and good are not followed up and taken advantage of that that Aristocracy is to be eliminated in just the same way as previous aristocracies had to perish. In those earlier days there was practically only two classes and a great gulf existed between these two classes. To-day we have three classes. We have the Aristocracy of Wealth and what is commonly known as the Working Man. Undoubtedly an altogether too narrow interpretation is given to that expression "The Working Man," and it is that narrow interpretation that has been the means of forming three classes in the world to-day, resulting in what is known as the "Middle Classes." But the present civilization is not going to perish in the struggle that will eliminate the Aristocracy of Wealth. The power that will perfect that will not come from either the Aristocracy of Wealth or the Working Man. It must come from the great mass of the people between these two. These are the people who can and who should rule but they have not up to the present time done so. We have had a great treat this evening in securing the speaker we did, and it perhaps would not be out of order for me to extend to him on behalf of this club a very hearty vote of thanks, which is about the only return we can make.

Mr. Adam Anderson:

I do not know whether to congratulate the club or the speaker for selecting the subject. He has given us a very interesting address and has dealt very fairly with trade unionism. I have been connected with trade unions for about fifty-two years and am probably the oldest trade unionist in Canada. In regard to the railway strikes in England; when I left the Old Country these men were working for twelve or fifteen shillings for seven days work. They had no sympathy from the outside public and all they could do was to organize, or as Sir Walter Scott said: "He who would be free himself must strike the blow." It is only recently when combinations of capital had become so great and so strong as to drive the working man into combinations as gigantic as the recent railway strike in England. From all ages down it has been because rich men were not satisfied with the wealth they were making.

You explained the difference between co-operation and co-partnership. A number of years ago a manufacturer in Yorkshire started this co-partnership of industry and he found it was the most advantageous thing he ever did as it saved him a number of foremen and personal superintendence of the plant.

You also spoke about co-operative societies. This question of co-operation is one of the things that is dearer to me than trade unionism. As Hollock said at a meeting in 1860: "Co-operation will be able to solve all our political, social and economic ills." I believe this is true.

Mr. R. H. Hamaker:

This paper is a start in the right direction. I have never heard of any paper to my knowledge read before the Club along Economic and Social Lines. What we particularly want in these trying times is Light and what we want to know is the Truth. The Canadian Government is just about to father another great Railway System, the Speaker mentioned the Government but dwelt lightly on the subject. I should like to ask what the function of the Government is. I would also like to know how many of the great middle class and the intelligentia are really interested in their Government. I am sure that if they were to more fully analyze their tax bills they would be far more interested than they are now. It is acknowledged the great organizations of to day are marvellously efficient. These organizations have made millions for their principals. Has the Government made millions for the people? Do we know for example how the Government is spending its money. Do we know how any of the Civic or other Government units are spending the peoples money. The Canadian Pacific Railway and other similar corporations issue financial statements, so that the stock holders and the public know how their money is being spent, but very few Government bodies, I fear, would be in a position to tell the people how their own money is being spent. It is the fault of the middle class in not taking more interest in their Government and if we should ever be able to get this class of people into the Government as well as the Professional Politicians we will get better results. This has been a very good paper and I hope that we had more like it.

Mr. Adam Anderson:

I should like to second the vote of thanks that has been proposed to the speaker of to-night. I think this speech should be printed and widely circulated. I believe it would do a lot of good.

Chairman:

It has been moved and seconded that a vote of thanks be extended to Major Robins for his valuable paper. Will you please signify your vote by standing?

Carried. (Applause.)

Major Robins:

Mr. President and gentlemen, I appreciate very much indeed the very cordial way in which you received that vote of thanks. The vote was not necessay. I am a member of the club and it will always be a real pleasure to me to serve it in any way that I can.

I was greatly interested in the observations of my friend, Mr. Wallace Robb, and want to tell him that I have discovered since the annual banquet, at which I had the pleasure of speaking, that the term he made us of on that occasion is a term of endearment in Western Canada, and I am to-night prepared to do him the credit of saying that I believe he meant it to apply also to Eastern Canada.

I do not know, but I am inclined to think that our friend who has been a trade unionist for the past fifty years misunderstood some of the things I said. I may not have made myself clear, but I certainly did not wish to convey the impression that trade unionism is always against the public. I also tried to make it clear that a strike might be justifiable.

A Member:

Civil war may be too, sometimes. (Laughter.)

Major Robins:

With regard to the observations made by our friend at the back of the hall about the government, I want to say that the government is what the people make it. It is one of the most lamentable things that the young men of this great Dominion take such little interest in the government of the country, and it is also a lamentable thing that so many of the middle classes neglect their public duties. You cannot have ideal legislation without ideal legislators, and you cannot have ideal legislators

without an ideal electorate. The people of Canada must take a greater interest in the government of the land and endeavor to see that the nation we are building is erected upon proper foundations. If the superstructure is to be of such a character that we shall be proud of it, and our children after us, we must see to it that the foundation is sound and everything in the way of corruption driven out of the government of the country. It is not within my province this evening to discuss the action of the government in regard to the public ownership of railways, but I want to say that I cannot contemplate without feelings of deepest regret that the old Grand Trunk —the pioneer road of this country—should be in danger of losing its identity. Whatever happens I hope that it will retain its name. The one thing I should like you to take home with you is that one observation to take an interest in the government of your country and let us see to it that the right men are sent to the Federal and Legislative chambers who will do their duty manfully without let or hindrance. Let me reiterate that you can only have good legislation when you have good men at the helm.

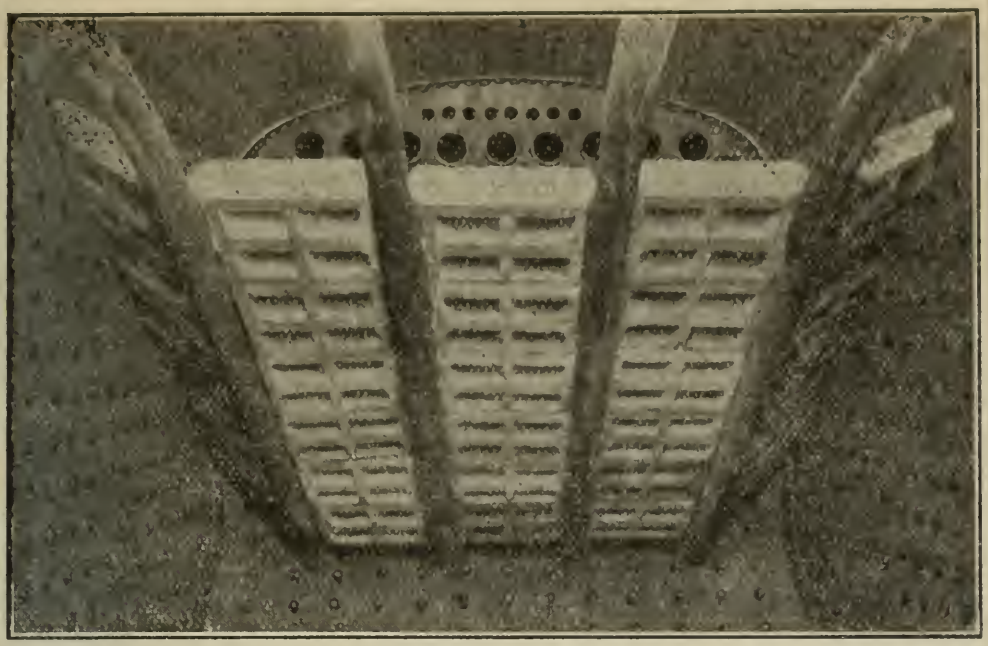
Secretary:

The President has asked me to make an announcement in connection with the meeting to be held next month. At the November meeting we shall have a paper by Mr. W. J. Harding, Chief Engineer of Power Plant at the Chateau Laurier and the Ottawa Union Station, entitled "Terminal Power Plants."

Chairman:

Gentlemen, we will adjourn. The Secretary informs me he has provided coffee and sandwiches in the room at the rear.

ALCIDE DALPE
Died October 9th, 1919



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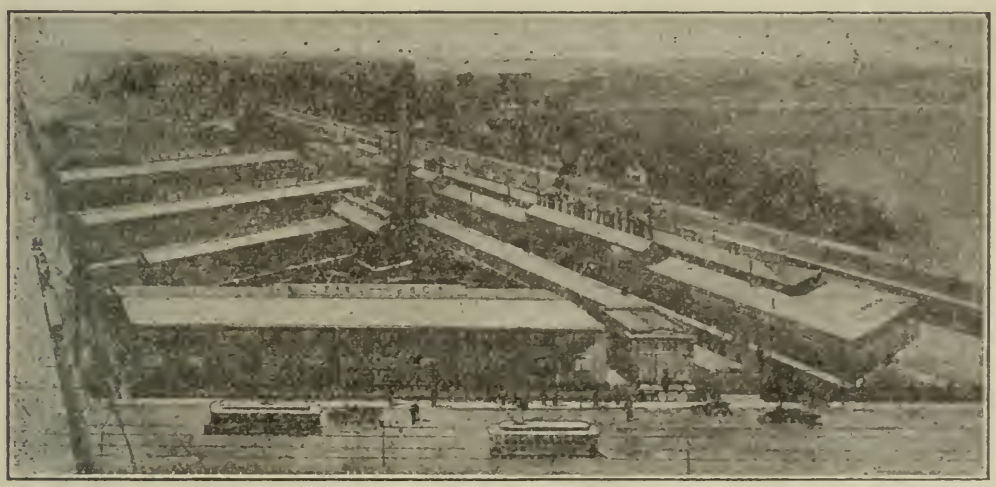

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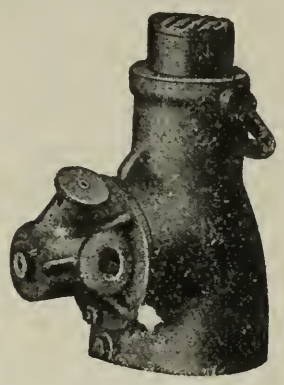

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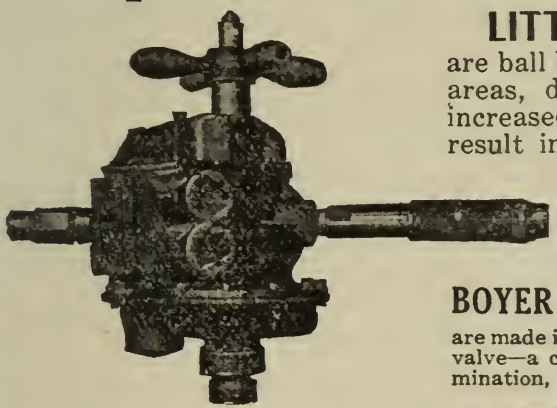

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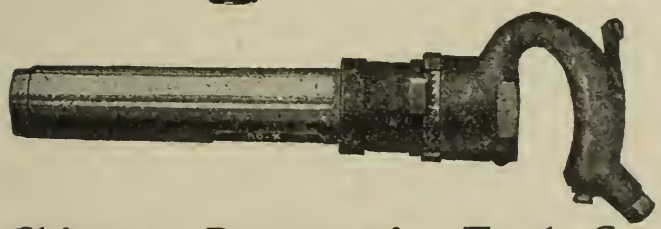

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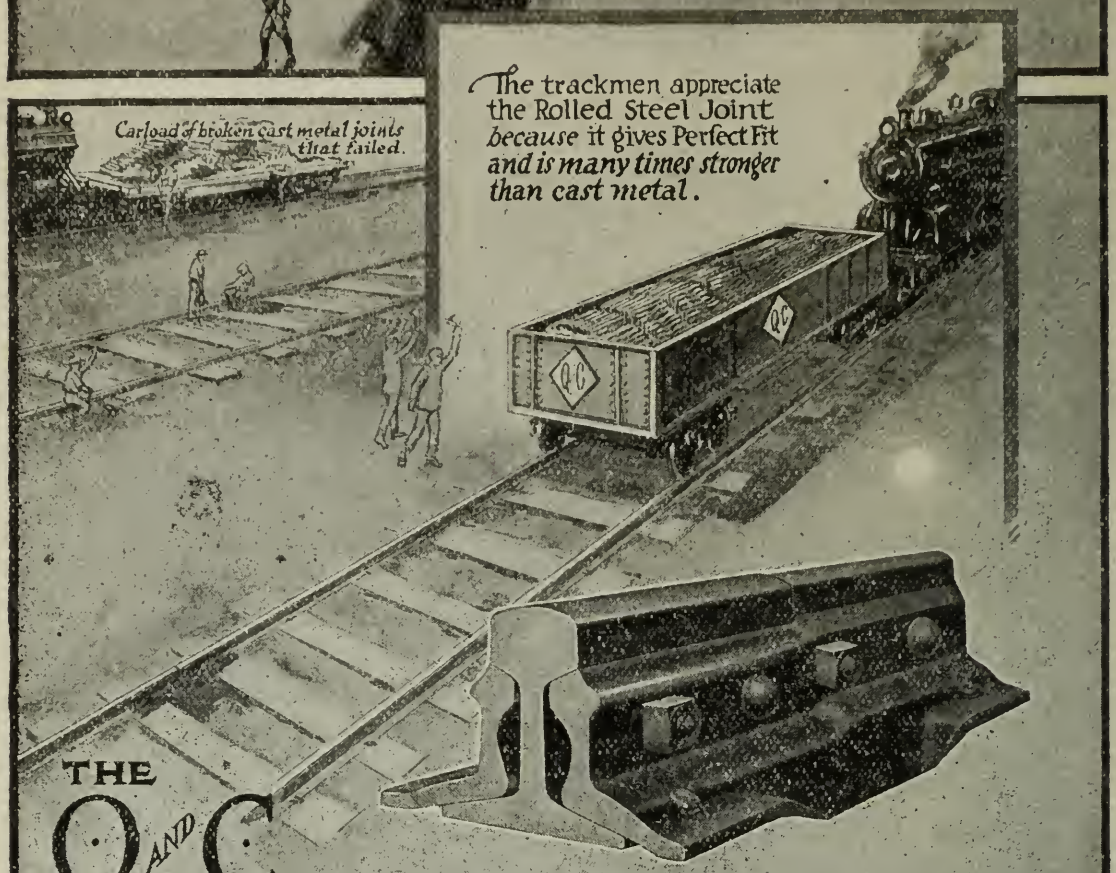
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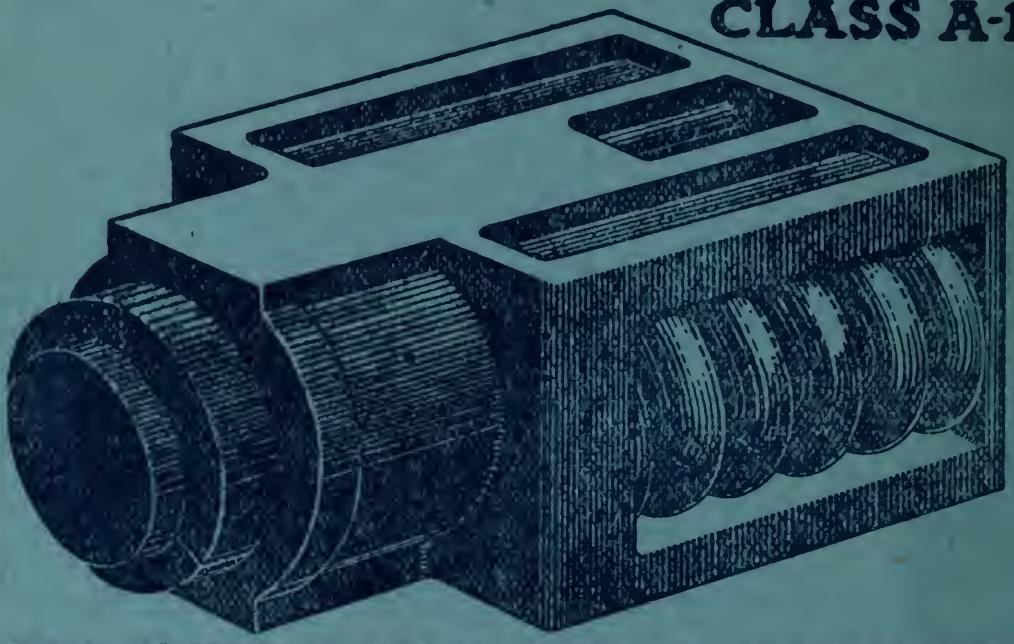

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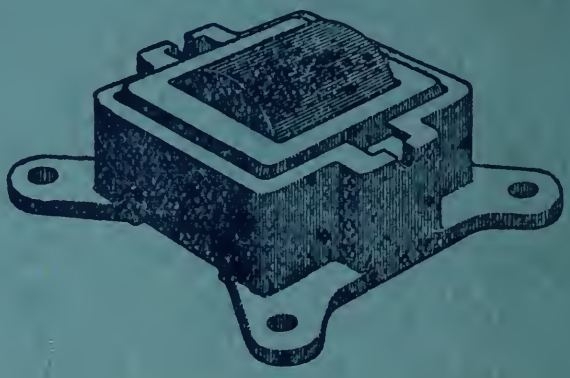

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